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Erika Mantz

University of New Hampshire

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UNH Alumna to Receive 2017 Social Innovator of the Year Award

Monday, November 13, 2017

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2017/11/13/UNH-ALUMNA-TO-RECEIVE-2017-SOCIAL-INNOVATOR-OF-THE-YEAR-AWARD)

DURHAM, N.H. – New Hampshire native Clara Miller '72 has been named the 2017 Social Innovator of the Year by the University of New Hampshire's Center for Social Innovation and Enterprise. Miller is president of the F.B. Heron Foundation, which helps people and communities help themselves out of poverty.

Miller will be honored at the 5th annual Social Venture Innovation Challenge Tuesday Dec. 5, 2017. The event will coincide with the final round of the challenge and will include a keynote address by Miller, "A Revolution of Capital: Connecting Money with Social Good." Following the keynote address, the winners of the challenge will be announced. Cash and in-kind prizes worth over \$65,000 will be given to winners to fund their ideas. The event is free and open to the public but registration (<http://www.unh.edu/svic>) is required.

A graduate of UNH's College of Liberal Arts with a degree in studio art, Miller has dedicated her career to helping address economic inequity in America by supporting in innovative ways the many nonprofits that are dedicated to addressing poverty. She is widely recognized as one of the most innovative and influential people in the social change field, and has received many awards including being named investor of the year by Institutional Investor Magazine in the "small foundations" category in 2015.

Miller joined the Heron Foundation in 2011. Just a few years after the financial collapse and major recession, Miller concluded that poverty in America had become a structural, systemic challenge, and as such traditional "marginal" approaches to poverty were no longer appropriate. She led a major restructuring that broadened the foundation's impact as an influencer in the fields of philanthropy and impact investing. Under her leadership, Heron broke down the traditional divisions in philanthropic foundations between program officers (who oversee grant making) and investment officers (who oversee investment portfolios), and committed to putting the entire corpus into impact-screened investments. Heron completed that ambitious goal of "going all in" in December of 2016 and now stewards its portfolio in a continual effort to optimize for both social and financial results.

Blazing a pioneering trail is not new for Miller. Just a decade into her professional career she founded the Nonprofit Finance Fund, an organization focused on helping nonprofits and their supporters be financially stable and nimble in order to explore opportunities, weather storms, and make use of data and ideas. Miller served as the president and CEO from 1984-2010.

The New Hampshire Community Loan Fund has partnered with UNH's Center for Social Innovation & Enterprise to provide support for the 2017 Social Innovator of the Year program. The fund was established in 1983, and was one of the first Community Development Financial Institutions in the U.S. The fund turns investments into loans and education to create opportunity and transform lives statewide.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH's research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than \$100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Erika Mantz (/unhtoday/contributor/erika-mantz) | Communications and Public Affairs | erika.mantz@unh.edu (mailto:erika.mantz@unh.edu)

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